

Using e-business tools by musicians

Wykorzystanie narzędzi e-biznesowych przez muzyków

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Abstract: The aim of the article is to show how the e-business tools are used by Polish professional musicians both in their vocational and private live. The base was a research made by the author for purpose of diploma thesis in 2014. There were several research methods used: panel discussions, overview of a different literature, interviews and finally a questionnaire filled by 50 students and graduated from different Polish music academies, e.g. from Łódź, Bydgoszcz, Kraków, Katowice, Warszawa, Wrocław and Poznań. By the research the author is to check which e-business tools are used by professional musicians, in which way, for which purposes and how do this tool influence the vocational and private life of respondents. By the questionnaire was investigated what is a consideration of possibilities and interest of e-business tools of professional musicians. Based on this research there are presented some conclusions and perspectives both for a professional musician and the cultural managers.

Streszczenie: Celem artykułu jest ukazanie, w jaki sposób narzędzia e-biznesowe są wykorzystywane przez polskich zawodowych muzyków zarówno w celach zawodowych, jak i prywatnych. Podstawą artykułu są badania przeprowadzone w 2014 roku na potrzeby pracy dyplomowej. Wśród metod badawczych zastosowano między innymi dyskusje panelowe, wywiady, przegląd literatury oraz kwestionariusz wypełniony przez 50 studentów i absolwentów polskich akademii muzycznych z Łodzi, Bydgoszczy, Krakowa, Katowic, Warszawy i Poznania. Badania ukazują, które narzędzia e-biznesowe znajdują zastosowanie wśród zawodowych muzyków, w jaki sposób są wykorzystywane i jaki jest ich wpływ zarówno na zawodowe, jak i prywatne życie artystów. Poprzez kwestionariusz zbadany został sposób postrzegania oraz poziom zainteresowania narzędziami e-biznesowymi wśród profesjonalnych muzyków. Na tej podstawie zostały wyciągnięte wnioski i zaprezentowane potencjalne perspektywy zarówno dla zawodowych muzyków, jak i managerów kultury.

Key words: e-business tools, musicians, culture management

Słowa kluczowe: narzędzia e-biznesowe, muzycy, zarządzenie kulturą

1. Introduction

Artists are stereotypically seen as people detached from the problems of the world in which they live, with the goal of creating beautiful and aesthetic, emotional experience. Unfortunately, the realities of the present day force them to go deeper into the issues as mundane as finance and promotion of its activities. Also for musicians the times of state patronage slowly fade away – professional existence increasingly depends not so much on an artistic talent but of a properly made marketing. Though a culture is also subject to the laws of the market, it is impossible to escape from the trends that are moving many aspects of life and business to the virtual space - including e-business.

The author, who is also a graduate of the Academy of Music in Łódź, decided to investigate how students and graduates of music use of the modern e-business tools in their professional activities. The aim of the work is to determine what services and projects using electronic musicians that are related to their career, for what purpose and how they are used. In addition, the author decided to determine what their career plans and the impact on activity in the virtual space.

The article contains the research made among the students and graduates of various Polish music academies. On the base of the analysis of the outcome from the questionnaire, there will be presented the results of the study and resulting conclusions and proposals.

2. Network services and network projects

Widely considered e-business differs from the traditional trade the use of the Internet and mobile technology to obtain and contact customer service. For this purpose it is necessary to use various services offered by the network media.

A. Nowicki distinguishes several such services. These include: WWW, e-mail, FTP, Telnet, groups and mailing lists, discussions and real-time video conferencing.

Web (WWW) is a service through which it is possible to browse posted on the network resource web sites on diverse topics, belonging to different institutions. It also allows to link documents using hyperlinks. This service is the basis of all the websites that can be viewed on the Web. It allows to create portals, online stores, corporate sites, blogs, etc.

E-mail allows Internet users to communicate via electronic letters, which in addition to text files which may include computer applications attachments. Nowadays mails largely supplanted traditional post letters because of the ease of access (conditions only connect to the Internet), marginal cost and speed of transmission - send message with an attachment a person located on the other side of the globe in less than an hour and does not even require exit home while messages sent by traditional mail would take a minimum of several days.

FTP is a protocol to transfer files to servers storing them in structured directories. Such servers can be public or intended only for registered users. With this service, it is not necessary to have physical storage devices of all data collected since and resources can be collected in the network. What is more, access to them is possible from anywhere in the world, which has the access to the Internet and relevant data (links, logins, passwords, etc.).

Telnet allows remote connection to computers connected to a network or to connect to the server and perform various operations on the device to which accessed by the user. As a result it is possible to work on the equipment geographically away hundreds or thousands of kilometers, which allows the establishment of cooperation bodies and users who do not even have to meet with them in person (e.g. the formation of a virtual organization).

Groups and mailing lists allow to exchange electronic correspondence by many users within the virtual community. They can be e.g. grouped thematically, so that the surfer can easily find a group of people with similar interests or likely to be his partners in cooperation and dialogue.

Conversations in real time allows simultaneous conversation using text messaging (chat) or voice (VoIP - Voice over IP). Videoconferencing service in turn makes it possible to transmit two-way audio and video in real time, allowing users to conduct video calls. These tools allow to communicate to people even from distant parts of the world, provided you have the appropriate software or use the same communication channels. This is useful in case of projects carried out by persons in different places, and, in an era of increasingly frequent emigration, enables quick and relatively inexpensive communication with friends or family members with whom it is difficult to meet in person, due to their distance. [1]

Based on cited services may be provided network projects. For this article would be considered some of them: blogs [2] and vlogs [3], e-books, e-journals and e-scores [4], e-learning [5], tracking [6], e-shopping: online shops and auction websites [7], social networks [8], professional portals, e-marketing [9], e-reservations, e-banking [10], electronic surveys, business partner searching systems, virtual organizations [11] and e-government [12].

3. Methodology of research

The aim of a survey made by an author in 2014 was to investigate how described technologies and capabilities offered by the Internet and mobile devices impact on the professional lives of students and graduates of Polish music academies. To this end, it developed a questionnaire, which was filled 50 students and graduates of music academies in Lodz, Bydgoszcz, Krakow, Wroclaw, Poznan, Warsaw and Katowice. Respondents were listeners of different specialties. Questionnaires respondents filled in paper form or in the electronic form (e-mail or transmitted through a social networking site). The survey was conducted in June 2014.

For all the questions it was possible to select multiple answers.

Question 1 is to determine whether the respondent is a student, or maybe has already completed the study programme. The

second question is the question of control (whether a person actually studied or studying at the music academy). The third question is to determine where or how to use the Internet - whether it is a place to live, work, school or internet mobile phone or tablet, or any other place. In question 4 respondent indicates which services from e-mail, web, video conferencing, VoIP, FTP, and Telnet uses. In question 5 the person completing the survey is to select the project electronics, which use (blogs and vlogs, e-books, e-journals and e-scores, e-learning, tracking, e-shopping: online shops and auction websites, professional portals, industrial portals, e-marketing, e-bookings, electronic banking, electronic survey systems, business partner searching systems, virtual organizations, e-government).

The next questions are open questions (descriptive). The sixth question asks the respondent to indicate listed in the fifth question, the undertakings that are used for professional purposes. The seventh question in turn identify those which appear to him/her in his/her professional life particularly useful and write why. The eighth question is in turn asked to provide these electronic projects, which does not use, but which could be useful for the professional purposes and justify the choice.

Question 9 consists of two parts. Respondent is asked whether the above-mentioned projects have an impact on his/her professional activities - is available to answer YES or NO. If choose YES answer is asked to briefly describe that influence. The last tenth question is to determine the career plans of students and graduates of music academies. There could be selected responses as follows: teaching activity, concert activities, making activities of culture, creative work, start their own business, working in the wider music industry or work not related to the music industry.

These questions were designed to determine where and how musicians use Internet resources, for what purpose they use them and what impact they have on their professional activities. With such knowledge would be possible to better adapt electronic products targeted at the professional group to its requirements, habits, expectations and goals. Based on these studies can also determine whether the use of the full potential that gives virtual reality to their professional activities and advocating enabling to acquire additional expertise in the areas where they feel unsatisfied and which want to have used in his work.

4. The outcome of a questionnaire

Respondents of the survey the majority (64%) were students of music academies. 24% of graduates and 12% have completed a course at the university of music, but is still studying the other one.

The second question was to show the field of study. There were mainly instrumentalists (organists, harpsichordists, flutists, trumpeters, guitarists, etc.), music theorists, composers, students of art education and sound engineering.

The vast majority of respondents use the Internet at home (94%). 28% use network access at work, while at the university - 58%. More than half (62%) use mobile technology, surfing the Internet via smartphone or tablet. 14% points to other places, such as restaurants and dining options, hotspots (one of the respondents pointed to the park with the urban network), academician, or simply all the places where there is wi-fi.

Almost all respondents (98%) use e-mail. To use the Internet admitted 84%. VoIP indicated 14% of respondents, videoconferencing - 26%, FTP - 16%. The least popular is telnet, indicated by only two people (4%).

32% of respondents read or have their own blogs, or vlogs. 72% use the electronic editions of books, magazines, or notes. E-

learning indicated 16% of respondents. 70% of respondents do their shopping in online stores and auction sites, and 36% track their shipments via the network. The most popular project among the respondents electronic social networking sites used by the vast majority (86%). In second place was ranked banking, used by 84% of musicians. They are also popular e-bookings, which showed more than half of the respondents (62%). At the other extreme were the e-marketing (4%), systems search of business partners (6%) and virtual organizations (10%). A dozen respondents uses professional vortals (22%), electronic questionnaires (20%) and e-government (32%).

The most common for professional musicians use electronic sheet music and social networking sites (both answers indicated 46%). Almost 1/4 of uses for these purposes electronic banking (24%), 18% shop online and 16% use the broader e-government. Less frequently used are professional vortals, e-bookings (8%), blogs and vlogs, e-learning (6%) and virtual organizations (4%). Individuals indicated a shipment tracking, electronic survey systems and find business partners. Two people, in turn, drew attention to the emerging question in 4 e-mail. None of the respondents used e-marketing. 14% of respondents say they do not use in their work of any of these projects.

Respondents to be particularly useful in a professional career, consider e-scores, indicating their efficiency, time savings, ease of access considering the fact there is no need to go to a library or bookstore, the ability to prepare for work and a broader spectrum of repertoire. Praise the availability of digitized collections of libraries outside their place of residence (especially in the case of people from the cities in which the libraries are poorly equipped and lack of specialist rental, which is common for musical staff) - one of the respondents pointed to the opportunity to view and download sheet music unavailable in Poland. Similarly, respondents expressed about scientific publications in electronic form. Equally popular are the social networks that facilitate contact with students, teachers, principals and colleagues. They also help in promoting their projects and concerts, inserting photos from events, reaching a large group of people and maintaining professional contacts. Not without significance is the ease and speed of communication through this channel. Respondents appreciate the blogs that allow to promote professional activity and the ability to draw inspiration and exchange experiences with other users. On the other hand, in finding potential partners to help are professional vortals.

Also electronic banking and e-mail are considered to be particularly useful - financial transactions and correspondence do not require leaving home and are faster, less expensive than traditional communications and save time. For the same reason some respondents use e-government. E-reservations also are popular because of the speed and the possibility of settling all the formalities in one own home. With e-shops musicians use in order to purchase the necessary equipment for work and notes, which cannot be bought in stationary stores.

Half of the respondents do not feel the need to pursue any other activity in the virtual space. One respondent argues that uses all the projects he needed. Others, however, would like to start using electronic banking systems, search of business partners, professional vortals, e-books, e-shopping because of saving time, money and a wider choice of goods, have Internet on their smart-phone which could facilitate commuting to work, start a blog, where they could advertise their artistic activities, settle tax returns via the Internet or use social networks as their own public relations. Gladly they would take part in a training conducted by e-learning, which would extend their professional expertise and interests. Interesting for musicians is also the issue of e-marketing, however,

they admit that they do not really know how you would approach this issue.

About 54% of respondents admit that described electronical projects affect their professional activities. They note the speed, ease and convenience of communication using electronic media, increasing the pace of work, facilitating the organization of work, saving time and financial resources to promote and notes, which are available on the Internet, expanding the pool of experience, the ability to self-education, become familiar with the experiences of others and gain knowledge about potential offers of cooperation and education, and a variety of information with the industry, promote their artistic activities and his own company, booking trips to concerts and training, electronic settlements with customers, availability of scores impossible to obtain in the traditional form. 44% of such influence does not notice (one of the respondents did not answer the question).

78% of respondents would like to work as a teacher. 56% would like to run a concert career (both solo and in bands, choirs and orchestras). In the wider music industry, e.g. in the media, editorial work, etc., would like to find employment 44% of respondents. 26% want to take creative work, creating eg. music accompaniment or presenting their own compositions. 18% of respondents see themselves in the role of culture animator or the owner of their own business. Almost 1/4 of the respondents (24%) do not preclude work unconnected with the music industry (only one respondent noted this as the only answer). Most people planning to take more than one aspect of the professional activity.

5. Conclusions from the questionnaire

By the research there was shown how diverse is a profession of a musician nowadays. The role of modern media cannot be underestimated.

The respondent use the Internet not only at home, but in every place where wi-fi connection is available or via mobile tools (mobile phones, tablets etc.).

Almost everyone uses an e-mail, VoIP, videoconferences and FTP are less popular and used only by 1/4 of respondents. Telnet is a marginal phenomenon. There may surprise that in so many questionnaires the musicians did not mark www - it may be an outcome of a low awareness of this notion. (to confirm this thesis in the questionnaires where www was not market the respondents chosen social networks and e-shops in the question about electronical projects).

The power of social networks was noticed by musicians. This portals are used both as a platform for knowledge sharing and staying in touch with colleagues, contrahents, customers, principals, pupils or teachers, and as a way of promoting themselves and their artistic and concert activity. By social networks the musician may reach potential recipients almost without investing big amounts of money. Moreover, some respondents would like to use this tool more efficiently for their marketing goals.

E-scores are highly estimated by respondents. Without leaving home and spending any money there is a possibility to access a huge amount of scores, which sometimes are not available even in a specialized libraries. Due to this fact, a musician is able to look through a wide offer of compositions before making a choice of repertoire for a recital or for a pupil. None of the respondents share their own compositions by the Internet.

Only 1/3 of respondents uses e-banking for professional purposes. It might be due to a lack of a regular income provided by full-time job (most of respondents were full-time students yet) or to barriers of e-banking developments like low trust to this kind of services or inadequate offer of financial institutions. But there

must be pointed that some respondents would like to start using e-banking, but they still do not have a stable payment.

Not much than ¼ makes shopping in Internet stores to buy a professional equipment (compared to all the clients of e-shops). Probably it is an effect of a low trust to sellers or insufficient advertising specialized auctions and e-shops which could rival with a small amount of stationary shops with musical staff like instruments, scores or other musical equipment. Not much of respondents uses e-reservation for professional purposes (8% in comparison to 62% of all). If so, the musicians point this tool as a way for reserving the tickets for the concerts or for planes.

Musician would like to use the potential of blogs in an active and a passive way: a writer and a reader. A good signal is that they see the possibilities that may open by this way of promotion and in the same time they want to up to date follow the other authorities and look in their speeches a knowledge and inspiration. E-learning would be for artist a good idea for broadening their minds too, especially due to a fact, that most of professional musicians is very well-organized and disciplined, but spend a lot of time commuting or travelling or have an irregular lifestyle (what unfortunately is very often in this profession).

Some people would like to make their carrier by their own, what resulted in an interest of some respondents in virtual organizations and systems of business partner searching. Not much (only 36%) uses e-administration, and only half of them in professional purposes.

What must be pointed is high level of a vocational flexibility among musicians – most of them does not limit themselves only by one professional path, but they allow the other way of earning money too. But it may lead to a sad conclusion that the artist is not able to earn for maintenance working in one place only, that makes respondents to start with different activities, which are unpleasant.

Most of respondents would like to work as a teacher, a large group would like to perform on a scene or act in some musical projects or record companies. Cultural management, creative work (e.g. as a composer) or own company are less desired possibilities for a professional development. It is not optimistic that almost ¼ of respondents (24%) allows the possibility of hiring in the other profession what seems to be a waste of mental forces and capital (artistic studies are one of the most expensive and requiring).

The questionnaire shown that the people working as the teacher use social networks to stay in touch with their pupils and due to e-scores they may have an overview of many composition and match a programme to pupil's abilities and taste. The musicians who play in bands or orchestras try to maintain the highest level of relational capital and use Internet for getting engagements. The soloist want to promote their activities in every possible way and are keen on electronical libraries where a lot of interesting compositions may be found. People working in other fields related to music are mostly interested in promotion too as this is the base of their professional activities.

The positive point is that the respondents – especially students who are to enter to a job market – try to adjust to the requirements of a modern world and notice the potential of electronic media as a tool for shaping and developing their carrier. They would like to learn permanently in this field. So there may be postulated to include this issues in the study programmes of Polish musical universities and try to create possibilities for increasing and confronting reached knowledge on this field.

6. Conclusions

The aim of this study was to examine how students and graduates of Polish music academies use the services and electronic projects to reach their career goals. The study found that almost all use the Internet in different places, trying to use its features, both in private life and to develop their career.

Musicians try to adapt to the requirements of modern times and still want to increase their knowledge about the possibilities of promotion and gathering information. More than half of the notes the impact of projects on its electronic artistic activity, which proves that even culture is not immune from the influence of new technologies. Artists begin to realize this and perhaps soon on the marketing aspect of life will spend as much time as to practice an instrument, or will be forced to find good managers, who know the specifics of their profession and the environment. In this regard, the management graduates can certainly still have a good perspective.

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